

CHILD FATALITY REVIEW REPORT MARICOPA COUNTY

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN WHO DIED IN 2005

This report provides information on the deaths of children who were residents of Maricopa County at the time of their deaths. During 2005, there were a total of 642 fatalities among children birth through 17 years of age in Maricopa County. Males were disproportionately represented among child deaths with 60 percent of the deaths overall. The increased risk for boys was even more pronounced in the 15 through 17 year age group with boys accounting for 73 percent of the deaths. Figure 1 shows the number of boys and girls who died in each age group.

**Figure 1. Age Group and Gender for all Deaths
Birth through 17 Years, Maricopa County, 2005**

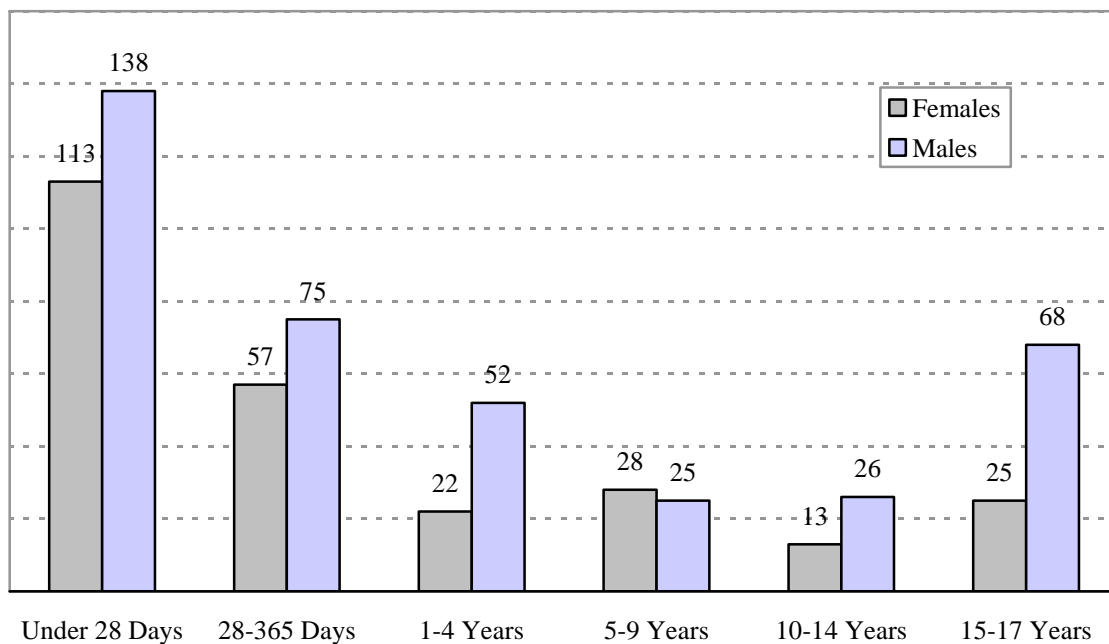
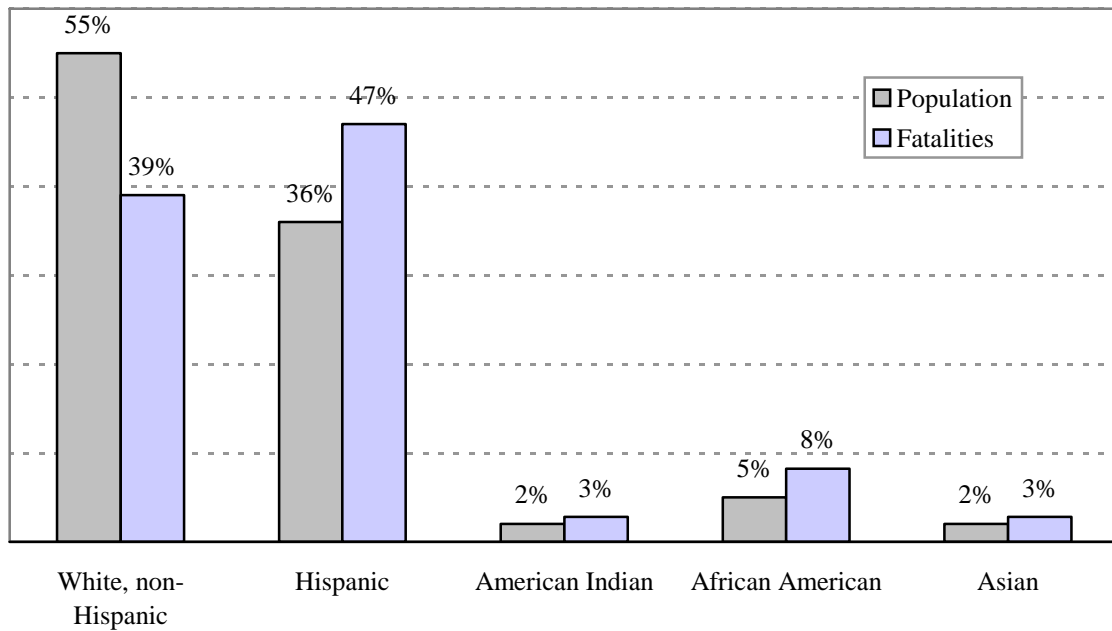


Figure 2 shows the racial and ethnic composition of the children who resided in Maricopa County compared to fatalities of children who resided in Maricopa County during 2005. Hispanics were over-represented among childhood fatalities accounting for 47 percent of the childhood fatalities (n=302), yet comprising only 36 percent of the population in Maricopa County.

Figure 2. Race/Ethnicity of Population Birth through 17 Years Compared to Fatalities, Maricopa County, 2005



CAUSE AND MANNER OF CHILD FATALITIES

Cause of death refers to the injury or disease resulting in the death (e.g. motor vehicle crash, pneumonia). Manner of death explains how the death came about. Manners of death are categorized as natural, accident, homicide, suicide, or undetermined. In addition to reviewing medical examiner reports, Child Fatality Review Teams review records from hospitals, emergency departments, law enforcement agencies, Child Protective Services, and other sources. As a result of this comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach, the team's determination of cause and manner sometimes differs from those recorded on the death certificate.

Natural deaths (e.g. medical conditions, congenital anomalies, prematurity) accounted for 69 percent (n=440) of all fatalities of children who resided in Maricopa County. Overall, 21 percent of childhood deaths were due to an accident and 44 percent (n=60) of accidental deaths were due to motor vehicle crashes. Table 1 shows a cross-tabulation of the cause and manner of death for children who were residents of Maricopa County.

Table 1. Cause And Manner of Death, Birth through 17 Years, Maricopa County, 2005						
<u>Cause</u>	<u>Accident</u>	<u>Homicide</u>	<u>Natural</u>	<u>Suicide</u>	<u>Undetermined</u>	<u>Total</u>
Medical*			247			247
Prematurity			174			174
MVC	60	1				61
Firearm Injury	1	18		10		29
Drowning	22	1			1	24
Unknown	1		2		14	17
SIDS			17			17
Fire/Burn	17					17
Poisoning	10	1		3	1	15
Suffocation	12	1				13
Blunt Force Trauma	4	4				8
Hanging	1			4		5
Exposure	3	1			1	5
Choking	3					3
Shaken Infant		2				2
Strangulation	1	1				2
Fall	1					1
Stab/Laceration	1					1
Starvation		1				1
Total	137	31	440	17	17	642
Percent of Total	21%	5%	69%	3%	3%	
*Excluding SIDS and prematurity						

PREVENTABILITY

During reviews, teams examine the circumstances surrounding the death and identify factors that may have contributed to the death. Part of this review includes a 34-item checklist of contributing factors. After reviewing the contributing factors, the team determines whether the death was preventable.

Child Fatality Review Teams consider a child's death preventable if an individual or the community could reasonably have done something that would have changed the circumstances that led to the child's death. Local Child Fatality Review Teams determined that 214 (33 percent) of the deaths of children who resided in Maricopa County were preventable in 2005.

Existence of a contributing factor did not necessarily result in the determination that a death was preventable. Forty-one percent of all deaths (n=266) had at least one contributing factor noted. Table 2 shows the top contributing factors for the deaths of resident children of Maricopa County in 2005, and the number of deaths that had the contributing factor noted.

**Table 2. Top Contributing Factors to Child Fatalities,
Birth through 17 Years, Maricopa County, 2005**

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Total</u>
Lack of Supervision	88
Drugs/Alcohol	77
Lack of Parenting Skills	34
Unsafe Bedding	32
Access to Firearms	28

MARICOPA COUNTY CHILD FATALITIES COMPARED TO OTHER ARIZONA COUNTIES

This section will compare the deaths of children who resided in Maricopa County to the deaths of children who resided in the remaining 14 Arizona counties. In 2005, 642 children who were residents of Maricopa County died, and 431 children died who were residents of the other 14 counties. Child Fatality Review Teams found that Maricopa County had a similar percentage of preventable deaths as the remaining counties. Overall, 33 percent of Maricopa County deaths were preventable (n=214), compared to 32 percent of deaths in the remaining counties (n=137).

Table 3 provides a comparison of the top causes of death for Maricopa County to the rest of Arizona. The top three causes of death were the same in Maricopa County and the remainder of Arizona. Firearm injuries and drowning were in the five most frequent causes of Maricopa County childhood deaths, but not in the remainder of Arizona.

**Table 3. Leading Causes of Death, Birth through 17 Years,
Maricopa County Compared to Other Arizona Counties, 2005**

<u>Maricopa County (n=642)</u>		<u>Arizona, excluding Maricopa County (n=431)</u>	
<u>Cause</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Cause</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Medical*	38%	Medical*	40%
Prematurity	27%	Prematurity	24%
MVC	10%	MVC	12%
Firearm Injury	5%	SIDS	5%
Drowning	4%	Suffocation	3%
*Excluding SIDS and prematurity			

Table 4 compares the manner of childhood deaths for residents of Maricopa County to childhood deaths for residents of the rest of Arizona. The leading manner of death was natural for both Maricopa County and the remaining counties, accounting for over half of childhood deaths (69 percent), followed by accidental deaths. Maricopa County had a

larger percentage of childhood deaths due to accidents (21 percent) than for the remainder of Arizona (18 percent).

Table 4. Manner of Death, Birth through 17 Years, Maricopa County Compared to Other Arizona Counties, 2005			
<u>Maricopa County (n=642)</u>		<u>Arizona, excluding Maricopa County (n=431)</u>	
<u>Manner</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>	<u>Manner</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Natural	69%	Natural	69%
Accident	21%	Accident	18%
Homicide	5%	Homicide	6%
Suicide	3%	Undetermined	4%
Undetermined	3%	Suicide	4%

Figure 3 reveals that the age distribution of childhood deaths of Maricopa County residents was similar to other Arizona counties. There was a slightly higher percentage of deaths in one through nine year olds for Maricopa County compared to the remainder of Arizona.

**Figure 3. Percent of Fatalities by Age Group, Birth through 17 Years,
Maricopa County Compared to Other Arizona Counties, 2005**

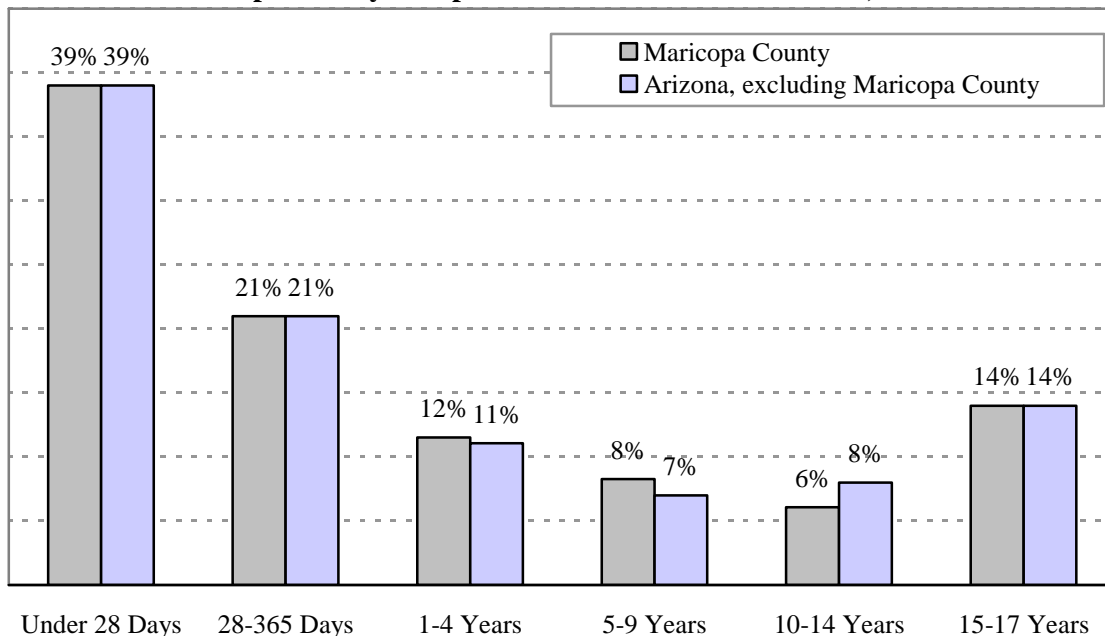


Figure 4 shows a comparison of childhood deaths by gender for residents of Maricopa County with other counties in Arizona. The gender distribution of childhood deaths for Maricopa County was similar to the rest of Arizona.

Figure 4. Percent of Fatalities by Gender, Birth through 17 Years, Maricopa County Compared to Other Arizona Counties, 2005

